

Message Text

SECRET

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53-L

ACTION SCCT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 PM-03 SP-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 SY-05 SCS-03

SCA-01 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /066 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5172

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 8584

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: ABDUCTION OF COLONEL MORGAN

REF: STATE 159765 AND BEIRUT 8583

1. THIS MORNING, JULY 8, I SOUGHT A MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER TAQLA, WHO RECEIVED ME AT 1100 LOCAL AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. TAQLA AND I REVIEWED COLONEL MORGAN'S SITUATION AND I ASKED HIM IF THERE WAS ANYTHING NEW. TAQLA, WHO HAD LEFT CABINET MEETING TO RECEIVE ME, SAID HE HAD HAD A LONG DISCUSSION THIS MORNING WITH PRIME MINISTER RASHID KARAME, WHO SPOKE AGAIN TO ARAFAT YESTERDAY AFTER SAEB SALAAM CALLED ME (BEIRUT 8495). KARAME TOLD TAQLA THAT ARAFAT HAD SAID HE HAD RAIDED THREE BUILDINGS IN THE HOPES OF FINDING COL. MORGAN. HE WAS PLANNING ANOTHER RAID EARLY THIS MORNING, FOR ACCORDING TO KARAME, ARAFAT IS DEEPLY CONCERNED RE MORGAN'S ABDUCTION AND HOPES HE WILL BE ABLE TO BE INSTRUMENTAL IN RETURNING MORGAN TO US. TAQLA ALSO SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH PRESIDENT BUT NEITHER HE, PRESIDENT NOR KARAME HAD ANYTHING TO SUGGEST AT THIS TIME OTHER THAN WHAT WAS BEING DONE. HE WAS AWARE THAT COLONEL BOUSTANY HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SYRIAN

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GENERAL SHIHABI WHO, THEY BELIEVED, WAS BEING HELPFUL. TAQLA

ASSURED ME HE WOULD LET ME KNOW THE MOMENT HE HAD ANY FURTHER INFORMATION. UNFORTUNATELY HE SAID ALL WE COULD DO FOR THE TIME BEING WAS TO HOPE FOR THE BEST. TAQLA SAID HE UNDERSTOOD COMPLETELY.

2. UPON LEAVING SMALL ROOM WHERE WE WERE MEETING, TAQLA AND I BUMPED INTO KARAME. LATTER WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO WALK ACROSS CORRIDOR TO SHAKE HANDS AND TO SAY THAT HE WAS FULLY AWARE OF WHAT TAQLA AND I HAD BEEN DISCUSSING AND WAS DOING EVERYTHING HE COULD. NOTHING ELSE OF SUBSTANCE COULD BE SAID, IN THAT WE WERE SURROUNDED BY THE PRESS.

3. PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER BOUTROUS DIB THEN ASKED ME TO COME TO HIS OFFICE. DIB SAID THAT THE GOL HAD CATEGORIC INFORMATION THAT AT SOME TIME THE ARAB LIBERATION FRONT, WHICH IS IRAQI BACKED, WAS MIXED UP IN THE MORGAN CASE. THE TIMING AND THE DEGREE OF ITS INVOLVEMENT ARE NOT REPEAT NOT CLEAR. DIB WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO SAY THAT THE CURRENT IRAQI AMBASSADOR HERE WAS DOING EVERYTHING HE COULD TO BE HELPFUL. DIB, LIKE TAQLA, WAS HOPEFUL THAT MORGAN MIGHT BE RELEASED THIS EVENING, BUT WHEN I TRIED TO PIN THEM DOWN AS TO PRECISELY WHY, THEY WERE EVASIVE. GODLEY

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NNN

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